



CITY OF AKRON, OHIO  
**POLICE DIVISION**  
JAMES D. NICE, CHIEF OF POLICE

NUMBER P-2014-12	EFFECTIVE DATE August 25, 2014	RESCINDS
SUBJECT Limited English Proficiency Procedure	ISSUING AUTHORITY Chief James D. Nice	

**I. POLICY**

The Akron Police Department recognizes the importance of effective and accurate communication between its personnel and the community that they serve, including those individuals with limited English proficiency. Hampered communication with limited English proficient (LEP) victims, witnesses, suspects, and community members can jeopardize safety and create evidentiary and investigative challenges. Officers shall take every reasonable step to ensure timely and accurate communication and access to all individuals, regardless of national origin or primary language.

The purpose of this policy is to establish effective guidelines, consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, and the Mayor's Executive Order of January 1, 2006, for departmental personnel to follow when providing services to, or interacting with, individuals who are LEP.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

- A. **Primary Language** – An individual's native tongue or the language in which an individual most effectively communicates. Every effort should be made to ascertain an individual's primary language to ensure effective communication.
- B. **Limited English Proficiency (LEP)** – Designates individuals whose primary language is not English, and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English.
- C. **Interpretation** – The act of listening to a communication in one language (source language) and orally converting it to another language (target language), while retaining the same meaning.
- D. **Telephonic Interpretation Service (TIS)** – Language interpreting.
- E. **Translation** – The replacement of written text from one language (source language) into an equivalent written text in another language (target language).

### III. PROCEDURE

#### A. OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Officers in the field who encounter LEP individual(s) will attempt to identify the individual's primary language.<sup>1</sup>
2. Once it is determined that interpretation services are needed, officers shall notify a supervisor that they will be requesting an interpreter.
3. It is the primary officer's responsibility to develop and ask any questions relevant to their investigation. Under no circumstances will an interpreter independently question an LEP individual.
  - a. Officers should only use family, friends, or bystanders for interpreting in very informal, non-confrontational contexts, and only to obtain basic information.
  - b. Exigent circumstances may require officers to immediately seek the most reliable, temporary interpreter available. For the purpose of this procedure, exigent circumstances are defined as threat to life, officer safety, fleeing suspect information, or the potential loss or destruction of evidence or property. Once exigency has passed, officers will proceed with obtaining proper interpretation services.
4. Utilizing Interpreting Services
  - a. Accessing Telephonic Interpretation Services (TIS):
    1. Dial 1-877-261-6608
    2. Provide Client ID # 912165.
    3. Select the language you need
      - a. Press '1' for Spanish
      - b. Press '2' for all other languages and state the name of the language you need
      - c. Press '0' for agent assistance if you do not know the language
    4. You will be connected to an interpreter who will provide his/her name and ID number.

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<sup>1</sup> One method to determine the individual's primary language is by using the "I Speak" cards issued to officers. For additional cards, contact the Community Relations Bureau.

5. Brief the interpreter. Summarize what you wish to accomplish, and provide any special instruction.
  6. Add the LEP onto the call.
  7. Say "End of Call" to the interpreter when your call is completed.
- b. Accessing the Interpreter: The Communications Center will contact the Interpreter Service Agency and provide them with:
1. The specific language needed
  2. The requesting officer's name, identification number, and car number
  3. The exact location where the interpreter is needed

The officer/investigator will note the interpreter's name, company affiliation, telephone number, address, on the investigative report, along with the interpreter's arrival and departure times.

5. Custodial Interrogations and Crime Victim and Witness Interviews

- a. Interviews and interrogations potentially involve statements with evidentiary value upon which a witness may be impeached in court. As such, accuracy is important. Moreover, a failure to protect the rights of LEP individuals during arrests and interrogations presents risks to the integrity of the investigation. A certified interpreter shall be used for any interrogation or taking of a formal statement where the suspect or witness' legal rights could be adversely impacted. Every effort should be made to contact a Skilled Interpreter if a Certified Interpreter is not available.
- b. Miranda warnings, and all other vital written materials, will be available to the suspect or witness in his or her primary language. In the case of a language into which forms have not been translated, and in the case of illiteracy, forms will be read to the suspect or witness in his or her primary language using an interpreter. Miranda warnings may also be accessed in various languages online at <http://translation.babylon.com/>.

B. SAFETY COMMUNICATION'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Communications Center will contact the Interpreter Service Agency and provide them with:

1. The specific language needed
2. The requesting officer's name, identification number, and car number

3. The exact location where the interpreter is needed
4. The Communications Center will ascertain the estimated time of arrival of the interpreter and relay that information to the requesting officer.

C. SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The supervisor will ensure that the officer/detective records the interpreter's name, phone number, address, and company affiliation on the investigative report, along with the interpreter's arrival and departure times. This notation is important and will allow us to verify the billing from the interpreter

By Order Of,

\_\_\_\_\_  
James D. Nice  
Chief of Police

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### CITY OF AKRON POLICE DEPT

### HOW TO ACCESS AN INTERPRETER

■ **When Receiving a call:**

1. Use your phone's conference feature to place the Limited English Proficient (LEP) speaker on hold.
2. Dial **1-800-523-1786**
3. Provide your Client ID#**912165**
4. Select the language you need
  - a. Press 1 for Spanish
  - b. Press 2 for all other languages and state the name of the language you need  
*\*\* Press 0 for agent assistance if you do not know the language*

*You will be connected to an interpreter who will provide his/her name and ID number.*

5. Brief the interpreter. *Summarize what you wish to accomplish and provide any special instructions.*
6. Add the LEP onto the call.
7. Say "End of Call" to the interpreter when your call is completed.

■ **Note:**

When placing an outbound call to a LEP, begin at **Step 2**. If you need assistance placing a call to the LEP, Please inform the interpreter or agent at the beginning of the call.

When the LEP is face-to-face with you begin at **Step 2**. Once the interpreter joins the line, brief him/her and place the phone on "Speaker" mode or pass the handset back-and-forth.

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#### IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

**INTERPRETER IDENTIFICATION** - Interpreters identify themselves by name and ID number. Feel free to note this information for future reference if your organization requires it for their records or to comply with regulatory requirements.

**WORKING WITH AN INTERPRETER** – At the beginning of the call, briefly tell the interpreter the nature of the call. Speak directly to the limited English speaking speaker, not to the interpreter, and pause at the end of a complete thought. Please note, to ensure accuracy, your interpreter may sometimes ask for clarification or repetition.

**CUSTOMER SERVICE**– To provide feedback, commend an interpreter, or report any service concerns, call 1-800-752-6096 or go to [www.languageLine.com](http://www.languageLine.com), and click on the "Customer Service" tab to complete a Voice of the Customer form.